

## **Historic, Archive Document**

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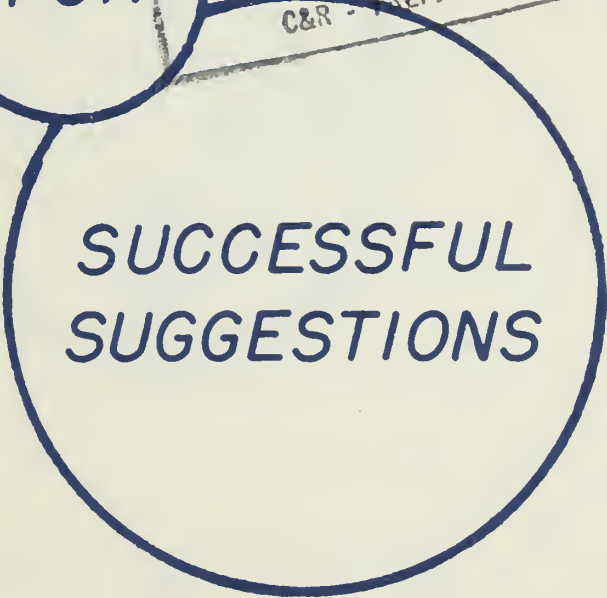




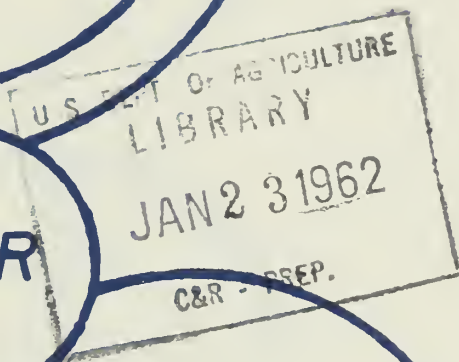
***POINTERS***



***FOR***



***SUCCESSFUL  
SUGGESTIONS***



EMPLOYEE SUGGESTION PROGRAM

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



992890

the Agency's

your Supervisor's

your

AIM...



IS TO PROVIDE THE AMERICAN

PEOPLE WITH MORE EFFICIENT

AND ECONOMICAL GOVERNMENT!



# YOU ARE THE BIG FACTOR IN THIS PICTURE

## BECAUSE

YOU know your job better than anyone else!

YOU know where the hidden costs lie.

YOU know where duplication exists.

YOU know where production is delayed.

## THEREFORE

YOU are in the best position to find and suggest ways to:

1. Reduce Costs
2. Save Man-Days, Supplies, Equipment, Space
3. Improve Service



How Do

You Make



1.

WORTHWHILE  
SUGGESTIONS



?

2.

STEP by STEP

that's the way



3.

it's done SUCCESSFULLY !

# I. CONCENTRATE ON WHAT YOU KNOW BEST...



Successful idea-getters and suggesters agree that the best place for anyone to look for ideas is in his own work area.

You are the one who can see the things in your work area that need to be done, the things that need to be changed to do the job, cheaper and more efficiently.

Maybe your study will eventually lead you to something that applies to another unit, such as what happens to the work before or after it gets to you.

But . . . YOUR OWN WORK AREA  
USUALLY IS THE BEST STARTING  
PLACE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT  
OF A WORTHWHILE SUGGESTION!



## 2. PICK A SITUATION WHICH NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

LOOK CAREFULLY



The things that need improvement most are not always apparent. However, there are a variety of clues to help you select a target for improvement.

### WHAT NEEDS IMPROVEMENT MOST?



#### A HIGH-VOLUME OPERATION?

Where a small savings multiplied many times can result in a substantial total savings.



#### TOO MUCH TIME?

Time consuming, complicated jobs offer some of the greatest opportunities for improvement.



#### A BOTTLENECK?

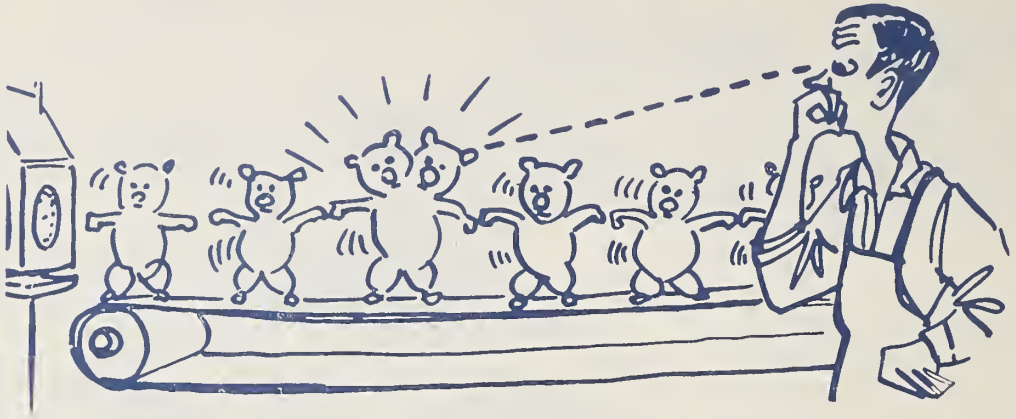
Here is where there is often much room for improvement.



#### CHASING AROUND?

For materials, tools and paperwork is a waste of time and energy on many jobs. Look for these cases. They need improvement . . . and need it now!

# PINPOINT THE PROBLEM!



**BEFORE** you can effectively "solve" a problem or make an improvement, you must have a clear understanding of what the specific problem is, what you are trying to accomplish. If the problem is large and complex, break it down. It is much easier to handle a series of small problems than one big problem that may be overly complex. Try to write it in 10 words or less. Try to state it several different ways. Try to explain it to someone completely unfamiliar with it. Such devices can help clear up your own thinking.

## THEN, PUT YOUR PROBLEM IN WRITING.

Be as specific and concrete as you can. With the problem defined, you will be well on your way toward improvement.

# 3. GET ALL THE FACTS



While it may not be possible to get *all* the facts that pertain to a particular problem, facts are necessary for a sound analysis of the problem. So after you have defined your problem, jot down on a sheet of scratch paper the procedure, equipment, forms, people, volume and time wrapped up in the area you've selected for improvement.

Don't shortchange yourself on facts -- on the other hand, don't get more information than you will reasonably and realistically need to come up with a solution.

Arrange your facts so that you have answers to such questions as:  
What work is done? Who does it? Where is it done? When is it done?  
How is it done? How much time is spent? What is the volume of work, etc.?



# 4. ANALYZE THE FACTS

## ASK? WHY

After you have collected the facts, study them to determine what the possibilities for improvement are.

Use these  
questions

List possible improvements

WHAT is done?  
WHY is it  
done?

Can the entire problem or operation be eliminated?  
Are there cheaper, faster, better ways to accomplish  
the same end?

WHERE is  
it done?  
WHY is it  
done there?

Could it be done somewhere else quicker, cheaper or  
better? Could it be combined with another operation  
elsewhere?

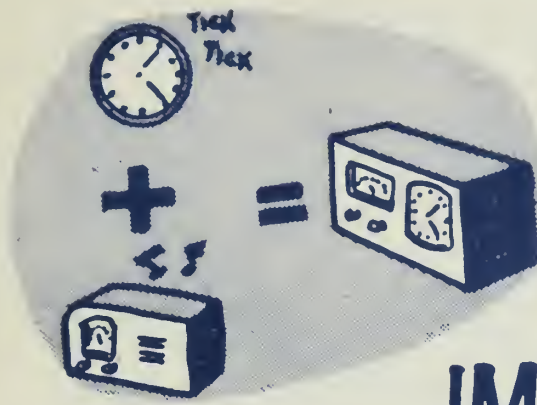
WHEN is  
it done?  
WHY is it  
done then?

Would another time or different sequence be  
better?

HOW is it  
done?  
WHY is it done  
this way?

Can it be done better, more efficiently, cheaper,  
some other way? Can it be done with less expensive  
material or equipment? Is new equipment needed?  
A new layout? Less space? Can the work be sim-  
plified? Quality improved?

Think only about ideas that might work in this step. Don't try to analyze why something won't work. Make a list of all possible improvements brought out by your questions.



# 5. TURN LOOSE YOUR IMAGINATION

Go after ideas -- lots of ideas -- all you can think up. It is characteristic of any kind of a problem that can be solved with imagination that there are many possible solutions. Your only guarantee that you will eventually pick the best solution is to think of a wide range of possible solutions. This is where your imagination pays off.

## USE IDEA STARTERS

Put things together;  
Combine things.



Move things around;  
Transpose them.



Look at things sideways.



Make things bigger.



Make things smaller.



# 6. EVALUATE YOUR IDEAS



Use your judgment on the various ideas you have come up with -- choose the one which will most effectively solve the problem.

## CONSIDER SUCH THINGS AS:

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IS THE SOLUTION PRACTICAL? WILL IT WORK?

---

WILL IT SAVE TIME, MATERIAL, EFFORT, EQUIPMENT, SPACE?

---

WILL IT IMPROVE SERVICE? QUALITY?

---

HOW WILL IT AFFECT OTHER OPERATIONS?

---

WHAT IS THE INSTALLATION COST?

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# ONCE YOU'VE PICKED THE "BEST" SOLUTION -



You won't persuade anyone your idea is the better way unless you are convinced that it is and are prepared to make a persuasive case of selling it.

## DOUBLE CHECK IT

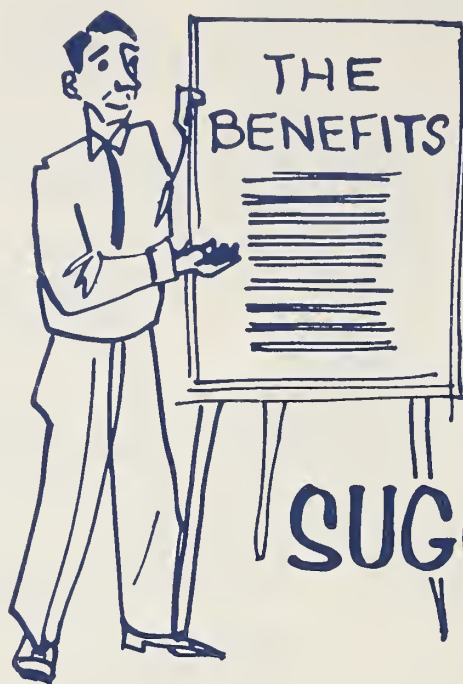
## THINK IT THROUGH

Re-examine your idea openmindedly and critically. Are you sure that your idea is operationally sound? Can you find any "bugs" in it? Have you tried to foresee possible user criticisms or difficulties? Can you state what the most outstanding advantage of your idea is?

## TALK IT OVER

Take the time to discuss the problem and your solution with those involved -- your supervisor, your associates, people with expert knowledge on the subject. Let them know that your idea is not intended as a criticism. Ask them for their frank comments. They may be able to help you make a more persuasive case of selling the idea.

IF THIS SHOWS YOUR IDEA IS WORTHWHILE,  
YOU ARE READY TO SUBMIT YOUR SUGGESTION.



## 7. SELL YOUR SUGGESTION

A well-organized, clear and complete presentation of your idea and its expected benefits is the best insurance for getting the idea accepted.

### IN WRITING UP YOUR SUGGESTION • • •

**FIRST** • • • Identify the problem. This section should state just what is now being done to give the reader an understanding of the current practices and to give him the background of the problem.

**NEXT** • • • Explain your proposed solution. Be as explicit and complete as possible. You should point out how the new practice differs and how it will achieve the benefits you expect from your proposal.

## **THEN . . .**

Point out the expected benefits from your proposal. Here is where you back your claims with facts. List the most important benefits first.

### **BENEFITS THAT CAN BE MEASURED**

Be sure to identify any savings in time, labor, equipment, materials, space, etc. If possible, turn the savings into a dollar amount.

### **BENEFITS THAT CAN'T BE MEASURED**

Describe specifically any benefits that can't be expressed in terms of dollars. Such benefits might include better service, improved quality, safer working conditions, etc. Be sure to point out who will benefit and how.

## **REMEMBER . . .**

You can't force acceptance of your idea - - You've got to sell it. To sell your suggestion you've got to convince the reader that your suggestion is

**A WORTHWHILE IMPROVEMENT!**

# TO SUM UP

## YOU CAN MAKE A WORTHWHILE SUGGESTION!

Sound and workable ideas come from using a systematic approach to find the BEST improvements.



1. Concentrate on what you know best.
2. Pick a situation which needs improvement.
3. Get all the facts.
4. Analyze the facts.
5. Think up possible improvements.
6. Choose the better way.
7. Convince others it is an improvement.



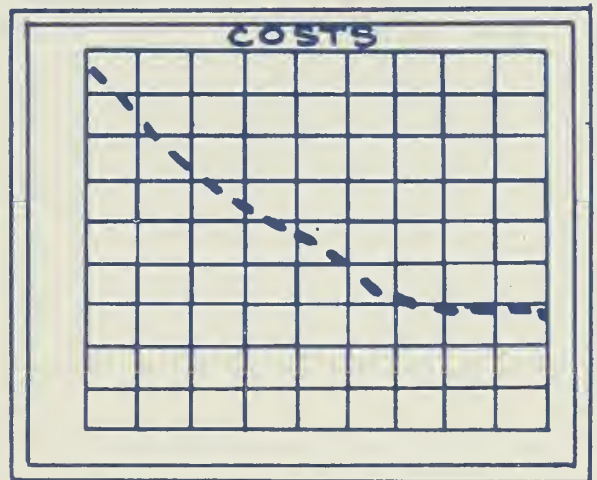
# YOU

CAN GET RECOGNITION  
AND CASH AWARDS FOR  
WORTHWHILE  
SUGGESTIONS



# YOU

CAN HELP IMPROVE  
THE OPERATIONS OF  
YOUR GOVERNMENT



# SO...

WHY NOT START ON THE ROAD TO AN  
IMPROVEMENT SUGGESTION

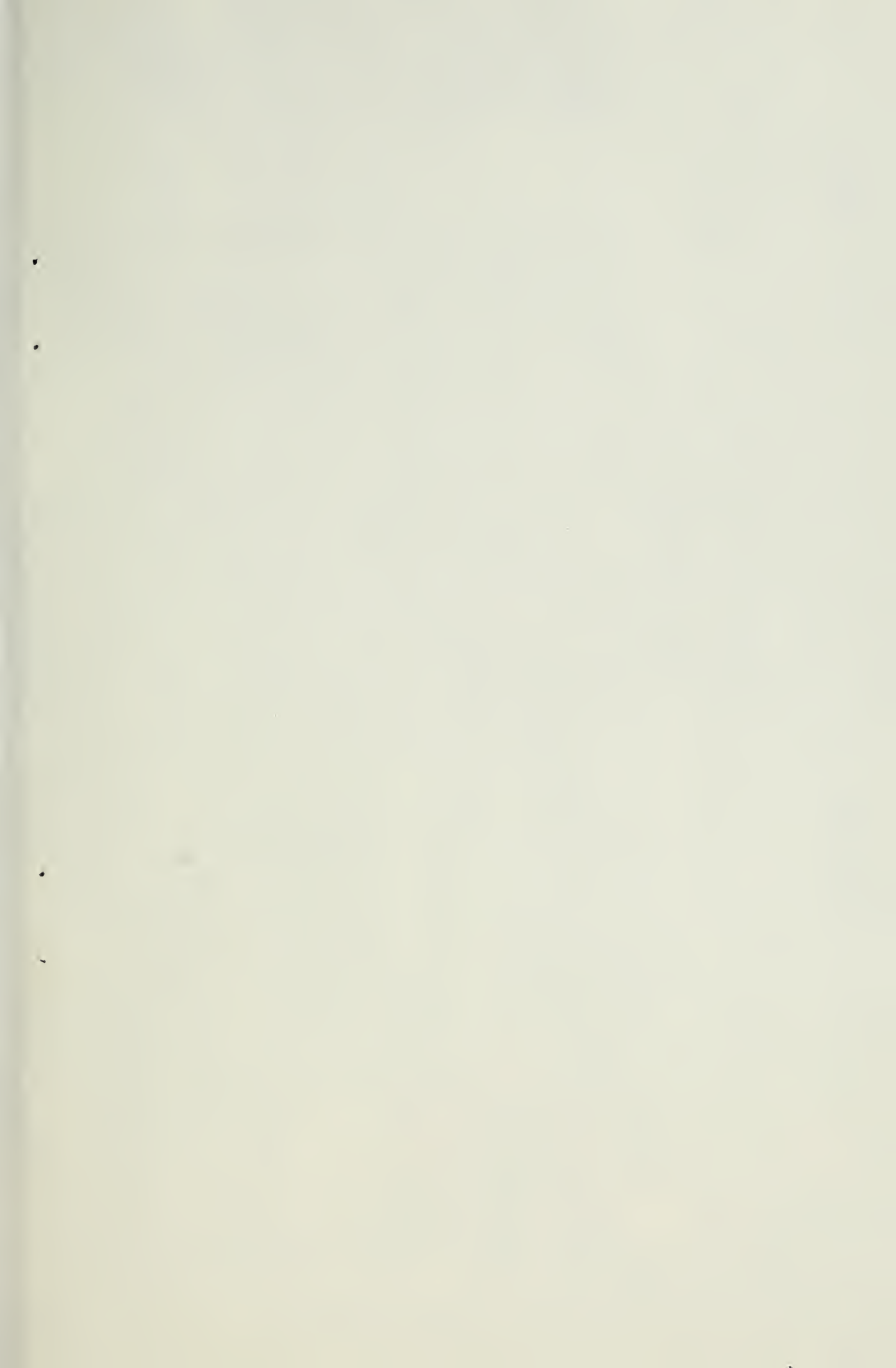
**NOW** ➔

# WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Use this page to list the work problems or situations which have been troubling you the most. If a problem does not come quickly to mind; start by asking yourself: What am I doing, or working with, or know about that could be done more effectively, better, cheaper? Sometimes just asking yourself "What's wrong with this?" will reveal a list of irritants that will provide a source of problems or situations that need improvement.

For the best solutions to your problems  
follow the basic 7-step approach.





OFFICE OF PERSONNEL

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